

EDINBURGH ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD SOCIETY

News

Issue 171 – January 2009



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Yes, it's that time of year again! If you have not already renewed your membership, please send your subscription (unchanged from last year) to Anne Brockington, Hon. Treasurer at 156 High Street, Prestonpans, East Lothian EH32 9AX.

SOCIETY ACTIVITIES

Annual General Meeting

The Society held its 38th AGM on 10 December 2008. Main points of interest:

- Two long-serving office bearers, Hon. Treasurer Hugh Dinwoodie and Hon. Secretary Brian Tait, retired from the committee, to be replaced by Anne Brockington and John Urquhart respectively. Our gratitude is due to Hugh and Brian for their immense contribution to the work of the Society over very many years. Hugh is continuing as an ordinary committee member, and Brian is taking over the role of independent examiner of our accounts.
- Ian Paterson also stood down from the Committee, the vacancy being filled by Anne Kerrigan.
- The Society's finances were reasonably healthy and it was agreed to hold the annual subscription at current rates.
- To facilitate compliance with the requirements of the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR) it was agreed to amend the Society's Rules by changing the Society's financial year end from 31 October to 30 September. This will give more time for the preparation and independent examination of the accounts between the year end and the AGM. The revised Rules are available from the Hon. Secretary.

Society Lectures

The remaining lectures before the summer break are as follows:

Wednesday 11 February 2009	"Burgh Surveys and Archaeology" by Simon Stronach, Headland Archaeology
Tuesday 10 March 2009	"Prestongrange: a community archaeology project over 5 years" by Biddy Simpson, East Lothian Council Archaeology Service
Wednesday 15 April 2009	"Recent Excavations at Forteviot" by Dr Gordon Noble, Department of Archaeology, Aberdeen University
Tuesday 12 May 2009	"Carriden" by Geoff Bailey, Keeper of Archaeology and Local History, Falkirk Museum

Polmont Parish Church

Over the summer and autumn, Society volunteers helped Geoff Bailey, the Falkirk Council Keeper of Archaeology, to clear the extensive ivy and other vegetation from Polmont Old Parish Church. As the pictures below show, this phase of the project is now complete, which will allow works to consolidate and protect the structure. Somehow the denuded structure seems to have lost some of its romantic atmosphere!



August 2008



December 2008

Dalmeny Estate

There will probably be further excavations in 2009 but details are not yet available.

Plans for Geophysics 2009 (from Dave Jones)

Cousland Pottery

Last year, in our first area resistance survey of the “pottery field” to the west of Cousland, we only managed to cover six 20m x 20m squares, while the magnetometry survey managed the whole field of fourteen squares. We started at the south end of the field, but the magnetometry shows all the interesting features at the north end, including such large anomalies that the assumption is that there are possibly three kilns to be found. The resistivity however did find building outlines that the magnetometry didn’t! A return visit by about a dozen members on 17 January 2009 enabled all but two of the remaining squares to be surveyed with encouraging results as far as the possible kilns are concerned. Sheena from the Cousland group has requested that we do an interpretation for them.

Cousland Nunnery

The area of the supposed nunnery, surveyed and written up last year, was due to have houses built on it, but while this appears to have been shelved, it is too early to say that work on the site will not recommence.

Cousland Windmill Hill

Last year, preparatory to further work, Cousland Historical Society cleared the site, which still includes the base of the windmill, of undergrowth. Geophysical survey is the likely next move and we await contact from David Connolly, who is arranging permission.

Cramond

Permission has been received for a resistivity survey within the manse grounds. The corner of the fort should be found, and although the south gate is probably under the footpath, the entrance road runs across the manse garden. Resistive linear array measurements could follow once we see what appears in the area survey. We will also make some more resistive linear array measurements over the edge of the raised beach at the north-west corner of the parkland in front of Cramond House. We know that, to the east, there appears to be a single upcast, ditch and bank, but both the area resistance and magnetometry seem to show two of each at the east end. The linear arrays should clarify what is there. Dates for the surveys have yet to be arranged.

Old Pentland Burial Ground

The small burial ground at Old Pentland has a number of well carved headstones and a mausoleum on the north side, to the south of which is a space containing no memorials. It has been suggested that this space was once occupied by a small chapel which may have had links to the Knights Templar who were based at Temple, some miles south in Midlothian. The 1894 OS map shows the mausoleum but not the chapel, so the building of one and the demolition of the other predate 1894. We have been invited to carry out a ground resistance survey on the "chapel" area to show whether there is any trace of foundations. This could be a site where we also use our frame with wider spaced probes to "look" deeper. A date for the survey should be fixed shortly.

Ogilface

Early last year *Time Team* showed some interest in the Ogilface castle site, and copies of our ground resistance and magnetometry surveys went to them along with historical information from John Wells of the History of Armadale Association. There was renewed interest from *Time Team* at the end of 2008, but whether this will turn into a further investigation and a dig (which the farmer seems prepared to sanction) is far from certain. It is likely that two further sites to the west would be worthy of survey. Possibly the more interesting of these two is the house of Lady Torphichen, the outline of which, identified as "Old Hall (ruin)", appears on the 1859 OS six-inch map north-east of Netherton Farm, adjacent to Harthill. By 1898 it had disappeared from the maps. John Wells is to organise access.

Penicuik

We have permission from Sir Robert Clerk to return to Castle Hill at the end of the shooting season. The written report of the wet sieving of the contents of the pit adjacent to the hearth in Trench 2 shows that the quantities of animal bone and charcoal found were too small to be dated. Backfilling the trenches and tidying up the site should commence in February with a view to wrapping up this project in 2009.

Coldingham Priory

The Friends of Coldingham Priory are looking forward to getting their hands dirty in 2009 now that their Adopt-a-Monument Community Garden Project has secured funding. The project has linked up with a programme of restoration works at the Priory commissioned by Scottish Borders Council and being taken forward by Tweed Forum. The next two years will see a transformation of the Priory and its grounds, and it is expected that there will be opportunities for EAFS members to continue their involvement at the Priory.

Howburn Farm, near Biggar (from Ian Paterson)

In 2005-6, I, along with several other members of the EAFS, took part in the excavation organised by the Biggar Archaeology Group of a lithics site [NT 080 436], on Howburn Farm, about a kilometre SW of the crossroads at Melbourne on the A 702. Expert examination of the lithic material has shown that some of the tools recovered were knapped by the earliest known inhabitants of Scotland. Some of the artifacts were comparable with those from the famous Starr Carr site in Yorkshire and are considered to be of late Upper Palaeolithic - earliest Mesolithic date. This suggests that the Howburn site was inhabited in the period prior to the Loch Lomond Readvance (10 800 BP). No relevant datable material was obtained in the excavation. It is intended that further investigation of the site will take place in the summer. A preliminary account of the material is available:-

Saville, A., Ballin, T.B. & Ward, T. 2007. Howburn, near Biggar, South Lanarkshire: Preliminary notice of a Scottish inland early Holocene lithic assemblage. *Lithics: The Journal of the Lithic Studies Society* 28: 41-49.

Scotland's Rural Past

Fife-based members of the Society have joined with members of Dunfermline Heritage Community Trust to carry out a SRP project on the ruined farmhouse at Green Nap, at Craighluscar, near Dunfermline. Some preliminary clearance work has been carried out and surveying should start shortly. If you are interested in participating, please contact john.urquhart1001@btinternet.com.

Important Acquisition at NLS (from Alice Heywood)



The so-called '[Mask of Agamemnon](#)'

The collection also includes an oil painting of the "Mycenae mummy", which Schliemann suggested was the corpse of Agamemnon. The corpse was so fragile that Schliemann commissioned a painting to preserve the image.

In July 2008 the National Library of Scotland acquired photograph albums and plans compiled from Heinrich Schliemann's (1822-1890) archaeological excavations at Mycenae in Greece. The collection consists of three photograph albums containing 274 large prints of the site and the almost 700 items excavated at Mycenae. This includes many intricate gold masks and jewellery. The majority of photographs are annotated by Schliemann. There are also 16 colour drawings and 6 beautifully executed plans by the engineer Vasilios Drosinos.

The John Murray Archive at NLS contains much relevant material on the publication of Schliemann's book *Mycenae and Tiryns* (1878) which made extensive use of these photographs and plans. The private sale of these albums will benefit The Knossos Trust, which supports Greek archaeological work.

The collection is available for consultation at NLS. For information on how to access the collection please contact David McClay, John Murray Archive Curator (d.mcclay@nls.com)

Congratulations!

Society member Dr Wendy Raine has been appointed to the board of directors of Archaeology Scotland.

REVIEWS

Edge of Empire: Rome's Scottish Frontier: The Antonine Wall by David J. Breeze (128 pp. Birlinn £14.99)

This slim volume is released to coincide with the addition of the Antonine Wall to the Frontiers of the Roman Empire World Heritage Site. It is aimed at the general reader rather than one with a professional or academic interest. With little more than fifty pages of text (discounting forewords, bibliographies etc), and with some of those pages less than half full, it is a very succinct account of the Wall, its history, geography and features, distinguished by the expertise one would expect from the author. It is also beautifully and extensively illustrated, including some stunning aerial photographs by David Henrie of Historic Scotland. It is to be recommended to anyone seeking an introductory guide, and will undoubtedly stimulate readers to go out and explore the Wall for themselves.

Exhibition

Byzantium 330-1453 Royal Academy of Arts, London, until 22 March 2009

The revival of interest in the Eastern Roman Empire continues with this lavish exhibition of Byzantine art. It is, of course, religious art, because in Byzantium there was no other. The exhibition demonstrates the all-pervasive role that art played in Byzantine life, politics, religion and even warfare – one emperor attributed the military success of his Muslim foes to God's approval of the absence of the human form from Islamic art, and in the hope of regaining military supremacy, ordered that Byzantine artists adopt the same practice. The exhibition is well worth a visit by anyone seeking to learn more about the thousand year empire that survived the Fall of Rome.

Other Dates for your diary

- 6-8 February 2009 Archaeology Festival, Cardiff University. Stellar line-up of speakers. Includes the *Current Archaeology* Awards. Special registration rate for EAFS members £70 or 4 for £210. Details at www.archaeology.co.uk.
- 20 February 2009 "The Burgh in Context c.1450-1750, William Robertson Building, University of Edinburgh. Enquiries to: j.m.toller@dundee.ac.uk
- 21 February 2009 "Anglo-Saxon Scotland" A conference in the Dark Age Scotland series. Enquiries to: aw40@st-andrews.ac.uk
- 16-17 May 2009 Scottish Community Archaeology Conference, Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh. EAFS will have a stand at this event, and some of our members are speaking. More details below.
- 30 May 2009 Archaeology Research in Progress. Our very own Dave Jones is speaking at this event

Peeblesshire Archaeological Society –

- 10th February 2009 Brian Hillyard, National Library of Scotland - '500 Years of Scottish Printing' Eastgate Theatre, Peebles, 7.30 p.m..
- 19th March 2009 Peeblesshire Archaeological Society - 'Illicit Stills in Peeblesshire,' Community Centre, Walkershaugh, Peebles, 7.30 p.m.

Scottish Community Archaeology Conference, Queen Margaret University, Musselburgh, 16 and 17 May 2009

East Lothian Council and Archaeology Scotland are organising Scotland's first ever Community Archaeology Conference. The two-day conference will celebrate the achievements of community projects from all over Scotland from Shetland to the Borders. This is an educational event intended to foster links between groups working in different areas of the country, bringing over 200 volunteers together with archaeological professionals. The conference will include training workshops, educational lectures and an exhibition of Scottish projects and initiatives. The conference will also produce a popular publication describing projects from across Scotland which will provide a snapshot of the diverse range of community archaeology projects happening across the country. Presentations will be given by community volunteers themselves, providing useful firsthand accounts of the realities and challenges of volunteering in heritage.

Programme Saturday 16 May

Opening address by Linda Fabiani, Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture, Scottish Government

Lecture 1	The Shorewatch Project: Community groups helping to save Scotland's eroding coastal archaeology	Tom Dawson, SCAPE
Lecture 2	Brora's contribution to Scotland's salt industry	Jacquie Aitken, Clyne Heritage Society
Lecture 3	Bronze Age Bressay: Adopt a Monument Project	Douglas Coutts, Bressay History Group
Workshop 1	Metal Detecting As A Means Of Enhancing Artefact Retrieval	Alastair Hackett (Scottish Detector Club) and David Connolly (British Archaeological Jobs Resource)
Workshop 2	Approaches to Interpretation	Kit Read, Interpretation Manager, Historic Scotland
Lecture 4	Poldhu Wells Restoration: Adopt-a-Monument Project	Nigel Healey, Cromar History Group
Lecture 5	Coldingham Priory Community Garden	Julia Carter, Friends of Coldingham Priory
Workshop 3	Survey Skills 1	Scotland's Rural Past team
Workshop 4	: Accessing the Land: Heritage and Access Legislation	Judith Lewis and Neil Ramsay (Scotways)
Key note lecture	Place-names and Archaeology: some pointers and pitfalls	Dr Simon Taylor, Research Fellow, Department of Celtic, University of Glasgow
Lecture 6	SRP Pentlands Project - The Places and The People	Robin Murdoch, Pentlands SRP Group
Lecture 7	Strath Avon Survey team: Doing a Lot with a Little	John R Barrett, Strath Avon Survey team
Workshop 5	Archaeology for All	Cait McCullagh (Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands)
Workshop 6	Making a community archaeology project	Rob Isherwood, University of Manchester
Lecture 8	The Biggar Archaeology Group	Ian Paterson, Biggar Archaeology Group
Lecture 9	Applecross Broch Community Archaeology Project- a team discovering hope through time	Project members

Programme Sunday 17 May

Key note speaker	Cave Chartham!: Using maps as historical sources	Paula Williams, NLS
Lecture 10	Cramond Roman Fort and surrounding landscape	Val Dean and John Dods, EAFS and Cramond heritage Trust
Lecture 11	An international community project between Shetland and Norway: the partial reconstruction of the Norse Stofa on Papa Stour	Jane Puckey, Papa Stour History Group
Workshop 7	Scottish Rural Development Funding: a focus on rural priorities for community groups	Sheila Fraser (Rural Direct, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations)
Lecture 12	Can you dig it? Yes you can. Volunteering on the Dun Eistean excavations	Anne Marvin
Lecture 13	Roman Gask	Project members
Workshop 8	Survey Skills 2	Scotland's Rural Past team
Workshop 9	Excavation, treatment and recording of finds, and post-excavation analysis	Sue Anderson (Head of Post-Excavation Services, CFA Archaeology Ltd)
Lecture 14	Black Spout (If you go down to the woods today..)	Jennifer McKay
Lecture 15	Digging up memories: The M74 Project	Thomas Wilson
Lecture 16	Prestongrange Community Archaeology Project	Project members
Workshop 10	Involving schools in community archaeology projects	Rob Isherwood, University of Manchester
Lecture 17	A River of Stone' Project	Earl of Caithness, Caithness Archaeological Trust
Lecture 18	The Battle of Prestonpans Community Project	Project members

Kent Archaeological Field School

The Spring and Summer courses for the Kent Archaeological Field School are:

14-22 February 2009: Leeds Castle, Kent. Excavation in the inner courtyard of the castle where geophysics has indicated earlier buildings. Cost to KAFS members £20 a day.

24 May - 19 June 2009: Excavation of a Roman Palace at Oplontis close to Pompeii. A small team from KAFS will be working with the University of Texas on a Research Excavation. Some weekly spaces available to KAFS members and two experienced Site Supervisors required. KAFS members £35 a day. Site Supervisors free on production of CV.

1-18 September 2009: Excavation of a Roman octagonal bath house at Bax Farm, Kent. The second season of campaign on this unusual and important building. KAFS members £20 a day.

7-11 September 2009: Archaeological Training Dig at Bax Farm. £35 a day.

Other courses through 2009 will include: Roman Pottery, Saxon Pottery, Human Bones, Lithics, Introduction to Archaeology, Field walking, and Archaeological survey. Archaeological Study Weekends are planned for: The Saxon Shore Forts, the Antonine Wall, Pompeii, Diocletian's Palace, Arles and Roman Provence.

Stone Pages

For those of you who subscribe to *Archaeo News*, the e-mail newsletter of the Stone Pages website (www.stonepages.com), a warning from Patrick Cave-Brown that MSN email account holders (e.g. hotmail, msn) may experience difficulties in receiving it. This is apparently due to additional online security measures imposed by MSN following a hacking incident, which are having an adverse effect on email distribution from Stone Pages.

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(Views and opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society, its Committee and Members, or the Editor).